

NEWS RELEASE



*Office of the United States Attorney
Western District of Louisiana*

DONALD W. WASHINGTON
United States Attorney

United States Courthouse • 300 Fannin Street, Suite 3201 • Shreveport, Louisiana 71101-3068 • (318) 676-3600
United States Courthouse • 800 Lafayette Street, Suite 2200 • Lafayette, Louisiana 70501-7206 • (337) 262-6618

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Contact: Donald W. Washington (337-262-6618)

William J. Flanagan (318-676-3600)

CONVICTED FELON GETS 20 YEARS FOR FEDERAL FIREARMS VIOLATIONS

Project Safe Neighborhood Initiative once again proves effective

LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA . . . United States Attorney Donald W. Washington and ATF Special Agent in Charge Mark Chait announced today that **MELCHISDECH J. GREEN**, age 33, from Lake Charles, Louisiana, was sentenced in federal court to **20 years imprisonment to be followed by 5 years supervised release** by United States District Judge Patricia for possession of a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

GREEN was indicted in December 2004 as a result of investigations conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives and the Lake Charles Police Department. GREEN pleaded guilty to the federal charges in January 2006.

GREEN was traveling southbound on Hodges Street on May 15, 2004 when an officer with the Lake Charles Police Department observed GREEN's vehicle crossing the center line several times. The officer

requested consent to search the vehicle, but GREEN refused. GREEN was arrested after a narcotics dogs alerted to the vehicle. The officers found ecstasy tablets, marijuana, a large sum of U.S. currency, and a .40 caliber pistol in the vehicle.

It is a federal violation for a previously convicted felon to possess a firearm and/or ammunition. GREEN was convicted in Calcasieu Parish in January 1994 on four counts of distribution of cocaine.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission may only be used as guidelines by the judge.

This case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide program begun in 2001, and designed to reduce violence in our communities by aggressively using existing federal firearms laws. United States Attorneys, District Attorneys, Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, and state officials have created partnerships to address crimes involving firearms. Generally, any arrest involving a firearm is reviewed immediately by local, state and federal authorities to decide whether the case is best suited for prosecution under state or federal law, or a combination of both. Project Safe Neighborhoods is expected to lead to longer prison terms for violent criminals, and a significant reduction in violent crime. To date, federal prosecutions under Project Safe Neighborhoods in the Western District of Louisiana have led to the incarceration of criminals responsible for violent crimes such as homicides, aggravated assaults, robbery, car jacking, burglary, and drug trafficking.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney John Luke Walker.

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